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ABSTRACT

Responsibilities for the satisfactory functioning of schools rest with school executives. These responsibilities include managerial and leadership skills in planning, supervision and evaluation of instruction and personnel, critical decision making, morale building, and in-service program development. The purpose of this research is to ascertain which of these skills are perceived as missing and therefore most needed by education leaders in Togo. The findings indicate that most administrators are at a loss when it comes to supervision of programs and personnel, decision making, and conflict resolution mostly because there are no written guidelines for developing policies and procedures. On the contrary, teachers view the most important skills lacking among administrators to be resource agent, instructional planning, and inservice development. A remedial plan of action is suggested to match these perceived needs through inservice and continuing professional education programs for school executives. (Author/TE)

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# PERCEIVED ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS OF SCHOOL EXECUTIVES IN TOGO

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ABSTRACT: Responsibilities for the satisfactory functioning of schools rest with school executives. These responsibilities include managerial and leadership knowledge and skills in planning, instruction and personnel supervision and evaluation, critical decision making, morale building, and in-service program development. The purpose of this research is to ascertain the above listed skills that Togo's education leaders perceive as missing and, therefore, most needed. The findings indicate that most administrators are at a loss when it comes to supervising program and personnel, decision making and conflict resolution mostly because there are no written guidelines for developing policies and procedures. On the contrary, teachers view as most important needs to administrators such skills as resource agent, instruction planning, and in-service development. A remedial plan of action is suggested to match these perceived needs through in-service and continuing professional education programs for school executives.

## INTRODUCTION

A worldwide crisis (Coombs, 1968) still exists today in education. The educational reform era which followed the romantic '60's was the answer to that crisis. Unfortunately, in the early 1980's the education reform movement stopped short as though something suddenly went wrong. Then educators, lay persons, taxpayers, and students began questioning the school enterprise again in search of efficiency and quality education. The issues involved in the failure of those early reforms include, among other things: shortage of trained and skilled teachers and administrators; lack of systematic planning and continuous evaluation of education plans; dearth of resourceful, strong-minded and dedicated educators of vision; and, above all, absence of constructive leadership (Hawes, et al., 1979).

Being a school administrator or an educator is not an easy job today whether it be at elementary, secondary, or higher education level; in a rural or an urban school. This is clearly seen in the expectations that the position holds. Whatever his position in the educational system, the school administrator is expected to be a community leader (Lauglo, 1981) a manager, a supervisor, a problem solver, a change agent (Wood, et al., 1979) and also an initiator, a stimulator, an implementor, a persuader, a dissuader, and not necessarily exclusive of each other (Culbertson, et al., 1974).

The major purpose of this study is to explore and ascertain the perceived educational needs of Togo's school executives. The researcher believes that the current sorry state of education can and must be addressed through a careful assessment of professional skills and needs as perceived by school administrators and teachers. In order to understand the many educational issues focuses upon, it is necessary to have a notion of basic facts about Togo.

### Background and Purpose

The Republic of Togo is composed of the one-time German colony of Togoland. Togo comprises a long, almost rectangular strip 50 to 80

miles wide, running northward from the Atlantic Ocean, between the Republic of Ghana on the west, and the People's Republic of Benin on the east, to border with the Republic of Burkina Faso some 320 miles from the sea. The total area is 56,000 square kilometers with a population of 2,753,100. General education is three stages. Each of the three stages ends in a selective essay examination. The educational structure is based on the 6-4-3 model: 6 years of elementary school, 4 years of junior high school, and 3 years of senior high school. The media of instruction is French. Shortly after having secured its independence in 1960, Togo began to examine its educational system which was founded under French rule and to question whether or not this system is adequate to ensure social and economic progress. This resulted in the educational reform movement which stated that the needs for education in Togo command the quest of the following aims: education for unity and citizenship, education for development, self-reliance, democracy, and education for all.

The objective of the present project is the ascertainment of Togolese educational leaders' needs in the light of the Educational Reform Movement. The basic assumption was that one of the major causes of disillusion in the implementation and development of the reform is due to the misperception of what is needed to fully implement its goals, philosophy, and curricula. It was then instrumental to examine what knowledge, skills, and training school leaders and administrators perceive as important for their immediate and long-term needs. Complementary views are provided by teachers. The study is organized and limited to the following questions:

1. What are the expressed interests and needs of school executives[1] regarding in-service activities and training programs for the improvement of their administrative skills.

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(1) The author considers as school executives or administrators such persons as inspectors, principals and headmasters. Most of them have become administrators directly without adequate training. They were promoted because of their success in teaching, but success as a teacher does not assure effectiveness as an administrator.

2. Which of the following are perceived by teachers as being the most important skills needed by school executives for an effective administrative operation: Leadership, change agent, resource agent, supervision and evaluation of personnel and instruction, morale building, decision making, communication, planning and implementing instruction, development of in-service training, conflict and conflict resolution.

It is assumed that the present research will provide means for selecting relevant areas for initial training and continuous professional education of school executives and with the urgency to carry out regular school evaluation studies as well.

## Rationale

It is no use trying to deny that in a great many African countries schools are blocked (Citron, 1971) mostly because of their centralized administration which acts as an impediment to innovation (Oury, 1971). The attributes of existing schools have lead educational reformers to recommend a variety of remedial measures. Klassen (1971) and Spaulding (1977) advocate the expansion and improvement of teacher education programs and the provision of in-service training courses for untrained of ill-trained teachers. There are those (Schultz, 1963, Ponsioen, 1972, Harbison, 1973) who think that some sort of manpower planning and human resource assessment is relevant to education. This is aimed at training administrators and school leaders of vision and leadership.

Being directly responsible for the operation of schools, it is therefore important that school executives need to perform effectively. Their effectiveness is determined largely by the extent to which they and those associated with them understand the purposes, processes, techniques, and skills of administration as they apply to school. General conceptions relating to the kind of administration required by schools include two dimensions: The executive dimension and the leadership dimension. The first is managerial, routine, supervisory, and administrative. The second requires knowledge of a variety of processes, operations, and the judgment to use them (Wood, et al., 1973). The type

of role school administrators are being called upon to play necessitates that they enjoy a high level of competencies. Among required competencies may be included the mastery of the following processes: leadership change agent, resource agent, supervision and evaluation of personnel and instruction, morale building, decision making, communication, planning and implementing instruction, development of in-service training, conflict and conflict resolution.

It has been commonly assumed that administration and leadership are synonymous. That is not the case. It is possible to administer a situation without exercising good leadership. Administration is often done by following rules and regulations. A study by Jacobson, Logsdon and Wieghman (1973) revealed that: "the average person who occupies a position of leadership exceeds the average member of his group to some degree in the following respects: (1) sociability; (2) initiative; (3) persistence; (4) knowing how to get things done; (5) self-confidence; (6) alertness to and insight into situations; (7) cooperativeness; (8) popularity; (9) adaptability; (10) verbal facility; (11) intelligence; (12) scholarship; (13) dependability in exercising responsibility; (14) activity and social participation; (15) socio-economic status." (p. 133)

School leaders as chief administrators are in an unique position to bring about behavior changes. There are behavior modification techniques which school executives can use that lead to a more positive atmosphere in a school situation. As change agents, most of the reinforcers that school administrators have at their disposal can be classified under the broad category of communication. Under this category fall such behaviors as praise, punishment, reward, personal contact, and advising (Jacobson and al, 1973).

Harrison (1968) in analyzing school administrator's roles concluded that as resource agents, the improvement of instruction must take precedence over more managerial aspects of their administrative duties. He also pointed out that teacher's individual needs cover a wide range but the right kind of relationship between administrators and teachers should allow the former to find out what the latter's major needs are. The broad general areas into which these needs are likely to fall are those involving instructional effectiveness, materials of instruction, human relations and personal problems. As resource agents, it is

incumbent upon school executives to help all teachers determine strengths and weaknesses in their teaching. This is part of the administrators responsibilities related to the supervision and evaluation of instruction and personnel.

The whole purpose of supervision is to promote a continuing climate of improvement. Wood, Everett, and Dale (1979) reported that all teachers need assistance and encouragement in reaching the highest level of professional development possible. The best way for school executives to achieve this is through instructional supervision. In addition to new teachers who need to be oriented to a school situation, at least two kinds of experienced teachers need supervisory help. These are (1) the experienced competent teacher who wishes to increase the scope of his/her professional activity and (2) the mature teacher who insists upon teaching in the way he/she has been taughts in bygone years. The former may wish to try teaching methods which are entirely new. Innovation should be encouraged and it can be possible only through a variety of supervisory and evaluation procedures.

Evaluation is at the heart of the administrative process. Educational goals and objectives are established on the basis of what are presumed to be the needs of learners while educational programs are established for the purpose of helping learners reach these goals in an effective and efficient manner. The relative success of these programs and the success of individuals in them must be determined solely in terms of these objectives. The process of evaluation is thus predicated upon the assumptions that there must be goals or destinations, that here must be means of determining status at different stages, and that there must be techniques for relating status at one point to that of another in such a way as to determine whether progress has been made and if so, how much (Harrison, 1968). Because educational evaluation enables to determine how much progress has been made, it is particularly useful in determining exactly what to do next. Evaluation in education also helps to determine the effectiveness of teaching methods. It is also the basis for determining what curriculum changes may need to be made. In a greater sense, as Harrison put it, "evaluation is a re-affirmation of allegiance to the stated aims of education in the sense that the program of offerings and the effectiveness of the methodology employed are examined in the light

of these aims. As a necessary step in sound curriculum development, evaluation must involve a careful description of what is to be evaluated, a recognition of the aims and purposes of the program, a philosophy or a frame of reference, and a definite criteria to be recorded and used as basis for judgment." (p. 228)

Good supervision and evaluation is conducive to greater teacher morale. Schools cannot be effective organizations unless teachers find satisfaction in their work. It is a major responsibility of school executives to create a climate which brings about a high degree of teacher satisfaction and morale. Mayhew (1960) said that morale "is possibly the least understood phenomenon, and the one so complex that almost defies definition." He goes on to say that morale is like an iceberg with only a third protruding above the surface. Improvement of it depends on the courage of the professional to face strong forces such as the passion and pride of men. Call (1958) defines morale as: "a mental condition which leads individuals and groups willingly to subordinate their personal objectives, temporarily and within reason, to further the successful achievement of the company's objective" (p. 267). He comments further that teachers with good morale will not only be inclined to remain in teaching but also be willing to accept and execute directions, conform cheerfully to reasonable discipline, and make best efforts without needing any pressure or decision from school executives.

All organizations are built around a system of sequential decisions. Those who effect the decisions are administrators and the making of decisions is generally recognized as important in the process of administration. Jacobson and Als (1973) comment on decision making reads as follows: "We expand the concept of decision-making to include, on the one hand, the process by which the decision is arrived at, and, on the other hand, to include the process by which we implement or make the decision work." The greatest number of decisions an educational administrator is called upon to make are those related to schools and to educational programs. It is the quality of the processes through which decisions are made, implemented, and evaluated that will to a large extent determine the quality of institutions and the degree to which schools and teachers meet their goals (Campbell, Corbally, and Nystrand, 1983).

Decisions are best implemented through effective communication. As most organizational problems, effective communication doesn't just happen; it is made to happen. A good communication must then be planned by school executives. The purpose of communication is to create a situation when a message or information becomes the common property of both a sender and a receiver. As a result of this act, "action must take place, understanding may be enhanced, confusion may be removed, a sense of colleagueship may be developed, or none of these may occur." (Campbell and Als, 1983) Sound communicative processes should be planned to encourage maximum efforts from teachers, to keep current an in-service program, and to avoid conflicts.

School administrators need to know that planning is a day-to-day exercise which takes place in the field at different levels of the educational system. As planners, they deal with such dynamic dimensions as goals, processes, or people; and they have to be inside the planning process, not apart from it. Thus, they will be in a position to give relevant information to set up a framework of alternative actions and to see the consequences in relation to personnel, resource, and time (Jacobs, 1964).

Among activities most planned by administrators are in-service programs for promoting teachers' continual growth. Such activities include faculty meetings for instructional improvement, educational workshops, curriculum committees, peer teaching, extension courses, travels, etc.

Administrative life focusses upon promoting cooperation, but administrators in schools as well as in other kinds of organizations must at times deal with conflicts. Deutsch stated that "conflict exists whenever incompatible activities occur," (p. 10). In some instances administrators are direct parties to conflict; in others, they are involved only indirectly or called upon to mediate to manage them. The behavior of school executives in particular conflict situations varies according to their orientations to its resolution and whether they regard themselves as initiators, defendants, or mediators (Goodlad, 1975).

In line with the above review of literature, ten important administrative skills were investigated and retained for the case study of school executives in Togo. These variables are: leadership, change agent, resource agent, supervision and evaluation of personnel and instruction, morale building, decision making, communication, planning and implementing instruction, development of in-service training, and conflict and conflict resolution.

## Sample and Instrument Development

The population for the study includes 200 school administrators and 200 elementary and secondary school teachers. The survey population was randomly selected to include many school administrators and teachers from both urban and rural areas.

The first step in the design of the survey questionnaire was a comprehensive review of the available literature related to the study of school administration. The second step comprises two phases: The preliminary survey and the pilot study. The preliminary survey was conducted by sending a questionnaire to selected top education officers whose roles and functions make their relationship with lower level school administrators important. The purpose of the preliminary survey was to obtain an overall assessment of the in-service needs of school administrators and the functioning of schools. The researcher selected then, those items most often given high priority, and reduced the number of items requiring responses to a level considered reasonable by the respondents and yet elicited desired data for the study. At this point, data demanded that teachers should be included in the survey. Based upon the information gathered, a pilot study was developed to include ten areas commonly agreed upon as needs and skills. These areas of concentration or variables found to be instrumental to school executives to perform effectively are defined as follows:

Leadership: the process through which an administrator (the leader) secures the cooperation of teachers (the followers) toward goal achievement in schools.

Change agent: an administrator whose behavior can lead to a more positive atmosphere and climate within schools.

Resource agent: a school executive who stresses positive aspects of human relationships and emphasizes cooperative approaches to the improvement of teacher's knowledge, attitudes, skills and classroom instruction.

Supervision and Evaluation: the control and regulation of school activities and the process of determining progress toward preconceived educational objectives and goals.

Morale: a mental condition which leads administrators or teachers to subordinate their personal objectives to further the successful achievement of their schools.

Decision making: the process by which a conclusion or decision is arrived at and the way to implement this conclusion or decision.

Communication: those upward, downward, and lateral devices which facilitate understanding and direction within the school environment.

Planning: the process of preparing a set of decisions for action in the future directed toward achieving goals.

In-service: any organized effort to assist administrators or teachers in improving their effectiveness and promoting their continual growth.

Conflict: a situation in which incompatible activities occur in schools.

## Data Return and Analysis

The high motivation of respondents gave a return rate of 100 percent for school administrators and 88.8 percent (177 respondents) for teachers. The analysis of the 377 returns was based upon frequency distribution. The frequencies were converted into percentages to make the results easily comparable and to enhance understanding. Besides, data gathered are presented in terms of numbers and percentages and responses regarding professional needs of school leaders and rank ordered.

## Findings

TABLE 1
RANKING OF ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES AND THEIR LEVELS OF IMPORTANCE
AS PERCEIVED BY TEACHERS

| Administrative Activities | Level of Importance | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 Very Low | | 2 Low | | Total Low | | 3 Undecided | | 4 High | | 5 Very High | | Total High | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Resource Agent | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 91 | 51.4 | 86 | 48.5 | 177 | 100.0 |
| Planning & Implementing Instruction | 8 | 4.5 | 9 | 5.0 | 17 | 9.6 | 0 | 0.0 | 58 | 32.7 | 102 | 57.6 | 160 | 90.3 |
| Development of in-Service Training | 7 | 3.9 | 11 | 6.2 | 18 | 10.1 | 0 | 0.0 | 122 | 68.9 | 37 | 20.9 | 159 | 89.[illegible] |
| Leadership | 18 | 10.1 | 12 | 6.7 | 30 | 16.9 | 4 | 2.2 | 43 | 24.2 | 100 | 56.4 | 143 | 80.7 |
| Communication | 9 | 5.0 | 15 | 8.4 | 24 | 13.5 | 11 | 6.2 | 69 | 38.9 | 73 | 41.2 | 142 | 80.2 |
| Morale Building | 11 | 6.2 | 13 | 7.3 | 24 | 13.5 | 12 | 6.7 | 43 | 24.2 | 88 | 49.7 | 131 | 74.0 |
| Decision Making | 16 | 9.0 | 31 | 17.5 | 47 | 26.5 | 0 | 0.0 | 101 | 57.0 | 29 | 16.3 | 130 | 73.4 |
| Supervision & Evaluation of Personnel and Instruction | 92 | 51.9 | 45 | 25.4 | 137 | 77.4 | 0 | 0.0 | 22 | 12.4 | 18 | 10.1 | 40 | 22.5 |
| Change Agent | 77 | 43.5 | 61 | 34.4 | 138 | 77.9 | 10 | 5.6 | 21 | 11.8 | 8 | 4.5 | 29 | 16.3 |
| Conflict and Conflict Resolution | 98 | 55.3 | 53 | 29.9 | 151 | 85.3 | 26 | 14.6 | 6 | 3.3 | 20 | 11.[illegible] | 26 | 14.6 |

TABLE II
RANKING OF ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES AND THEIR LEVELS OF IMPORTANCE
AS PERCEIVED BY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

| Administrative Activities | Level of Importance | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 Very Low | | 2 Low | | Total Low | | 3 Undecided | | 4 High | | 5 Very High | | Total High | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Supervision & Evaluation of Personnel and Instruction | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 0.5 | 1 | 0.5 | 0 | 0.0 | 16 | 8.0 | 183 | 91.5 | 200 | 100.0 |
| Decision Making | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 32 | 16.0 | 168 | 84.0 | 200 | 100.0 |
| Conflict and Conflict Resolution | 1 | 0.5 | 2 | 1.0 | 3 | 1.5 | 0 | 0.0 | 88 | 44.0 | 109 | 54.5 | 197 | 98.5 |
| Leadership | 0 | 0.0 | 8 | 4.0 | 8 | 4.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 109 | 54.5 | 83 | 41.5 | 192 | 96.0 |
| Change Agent | 4 | 2.0 | 9 | 4.5 | 13 | 6.5 | 10 | 5.0 | 113 | 56.5 | 64 | 32.0 | 177 | 88.5 |
| Development of In-Service Training | 88 | 44.0 | 92 | 46.0 | 180 | 90.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 9 | 4.5 | 11 | 5.5 | 20 | 10.0 |
| Resource Agent | 61 | 25.5 | 131 | 65.5 | 182 | 91.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 11 | 5.5 | 8 | 4.0 | 18 | 9.0 |
| Communication | 103 | 51.5 | 87 | 43.5 | 190 | 95.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 3 | 1.5 | 7 | 3.5 | 10 | 5.0 |
| Morale Building | 99 | 49.5 | 76 | 38.0 | 175 | 87.5 | 17 | 8.5 | 3 | 1.5 | 5 | 2.5 | 6 | 4.0 |
| Planning and Implementing Instruction | 79 | 39.5 | 112 | 56.0 | 189 | 94.5 | 4 | 2.0 | 6 | 3.0 | 1 | 0.5 | 7 | 3.5 |

Tables I and II present a ranking in descending order of the level of importance of administrative activities essential to school leaders as perceived by both school teachers and administrators. Each of ten different administrative activities was ranked by the respondents on a one-to-five point scale from low to high importance. The administrative activity most frequently ranked with a five or given the highest importance by school administrators was supervision and evaluation of personnel and instruction. One hundred and eighty three administrators or 91.5 percent of those responding indicated that this area was the most important in the operation of schools.

The second highest administrative activity was decision making followed by conflict resolution and leadership. Activities considered least important include planning, morale building, communication and resource agent to teachers.

Teachers, on the contrary, indicated as least essential, the following administrative activities: conflict resolution, supervision and evaluation of personnel, and instruction and decision making. They view as most important needs to administrators such skills as: resource agent, instruction planning, in-service training, and leadership.

## Summary and Recommendation

The purpose of this survey was to explore the administrative needs of school leaders in Togo. The general procedures included a total sample of 400 school administrators. The findings were that the idea of in-service growth must reach down into the Togolese school system. Professional education for school administrators must emphasize those subjects and content areas which deal with the theory and practice of administration, the understanding of the principles of leadership, its scope and styles, the knowledge of the decision making and communication process, climate and morale building.

One way to equip school administrators with managerial, supervisory, and leadership skills as described above is through in-service training and continuing education programs. Such programs can help cope with the inadequate understanding of the nature of administration, the ignorance of specific knowledge, and the lack of essential skills.

The following recommendations are presented on the basis of the study:

1. Supervision and staff development should be strengthened as to maintain much closer links between teachers and the administration and to bring more frequent help and professional stimulation to the teacher in the classroom.
2. The in-service programs should be systematically developed to fulfill specific instructional or administrative needs of those school leaders participating in the program. The pre-requisite for planning in-service programs is ascertaining the needs that people involved in perceive as necessary for improving their performance.
3. In-service programs should provide for active involvement in a learning situation. Providing a participatory oriented program offers administrators opportunities to relate their own performance capabilities to those being recommended.
4. In-service courses should emphasize self-development opportunities; they also should be designed so that follow-up assistance can be provided.
5. There should be a steady move in style and organization away from a colonial type of administration in which the task of the central office of education is largely seen as detailed control of schools, deciding, authorizing and ordering what they should do and when.

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